

ANCIENT AND MEDIÆVAL
CARVED IVORIES

IN THE

SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.



VA. 1872.0016

ANCIENT AND MEDIÆVAL CARVED IVORIES.

*Photographs of a Selection of Twenty-four of the most
important examples in the South Kensington Museum.*

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PHOTOGRAPH I.

South Kensington Museum No. 1617. '55.

MIRROR CASE. The assault and surrender of the Castle of Love. French. 14th century. Diameter, $5\frac{3}{8}$ inches. Bought, 50*l.* 12*s.*

This very fine mirror case is well designed and most carefully executed. In front and occupying the centre is the gateway of the castle with doors closed but with raised portcullis. Two towers flank the gateway, and behind it is the battlemented wall over which the ladies have been watching the assault.

On the left, at the top of a rope ladder, a knight has just reached the parapet where he is helped over by one of the ladies. He has left his helmet below. On horseback, close to the wall on the same side, is another knight who raises his sword by the point as token of victory with one hand, and with the other removes the heavy helmet from his head.

On the battlements in the middle, a knight already received into the castle, probably their chief, kisses and embraces one of the ladies, and by their side another knight is assisting a fourth over the wall; this last has been standing on the top of his horse, the easier to get up, and his foot still rests on the pommel of his saddle. He is further helped by another knight on horseback, who half pushes him over.

Above the castle is a balcony decorated with trefoils; in this stands an allegorical figure of Love winged like a seraph, and striking on each hand with his arrows two ladies. Two other ladies sit at the ends of the balcony, looking over, as if meditating or watching.

Three lions, carved with much spirit, creep round the outside rim of the mirror case. A fourth has been broken off.



MIRROR CASE.

Fourteenth Century.

No. 1617-55.

PHOTOGRAPH II.

South Kensington Museum No. 7606. '61.

TRIPTYCH. Subjects from the Gospels. Italian. 14th century. From the Gigli-Campana Collection. Height, including pedestal and frame, 2 feet $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches; width of centre, $8\frac{3}{4}$ inches; width of each wing, $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches; height of pedestal, 6 inches, composed of pieces of bone fixed close together with cement into a frame of marquetry. Bought, 35/.

This is a large example of the sculpture in bone, common in Italy during the 14th and 15th centuries. Each group or single figure is on a separate piece of bone, rounded in its natural form. The centre is divided into two compartments; one, the lower, square, with five single figures; the other, rising in height from an inch on each side into the pediment of the frame.

The centre subject, above, is the Crucifixion. The bone in the middle has our Lord hanging upon the cross, with two soldiers at the foot of it, each wearing a pointed helmet and carrying a long pointed shield, standing one on the right the other on the left side. The two adjoining pieces are, on the left, the Blessed Virgin and two women; behind one of them is seen the helmet of another soldier who carries a small banner; on the right, St. John, whose head is drooping upon his breast, and behind him three spectators with another soldier and his banner.

The left wing, at top, has two pieces of bone; the two, the Annunciation. The angel kneels on one knee before the Virgin, who is sitting on a raised seat or throne below a canopy from which a curtain hangs. The two pieces in the right wing, in the corresponding compartment, show the Agony in the garden.

The centre and both wings of the lower rectangular divisions are filled with saints; one figure on each piece of bone. In the middle the Virgin and Child; the saints are St. Christopher, St. Lawrence, St. Stephen, St. John Baptist, St. John the Evangelist, St. Paul, and St. Anthony Abbot with his crutch.

The borders of the frame and upper mouldings of the pedestal are inlaid with small bits of ivory in the style of the Italian caskets and furniture of the same period. The base of the pedestal and the outside mouldings of the pediment are gilded.



TRIPTYCH.

Fourteenth Century.

No. 7606-61

PHOTOGRAPH III.

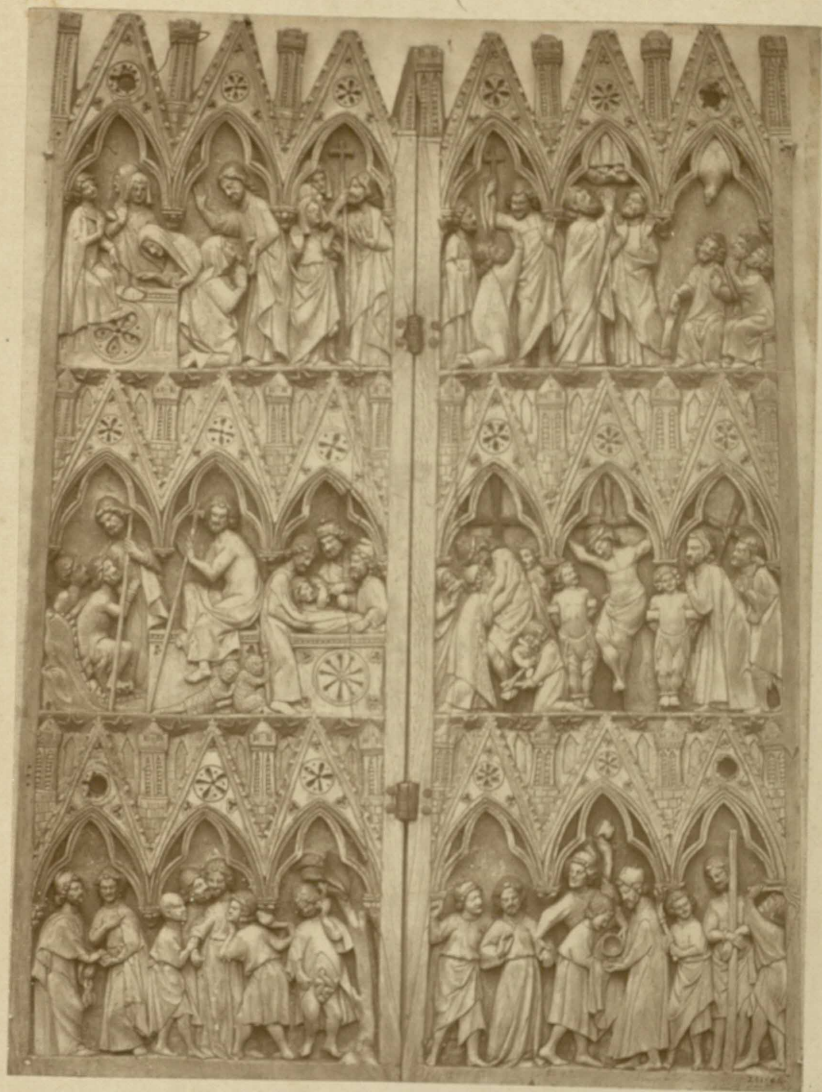
South Kensington Museum No. 211. '65.

DIPTYCH, or pair of folding devotional Tablets. Subjects from the Passion. French. Early 14th century. Formerly in the treasury of the Cathedral of Soissons. Height, $12\frac{3}{4}$ inches; width of each leaf, $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Bought, 308/.

No example in the collection surpasses this splendid diptych in richness of architectural decoration, in beauty of design, or in excellence of workmanship.

The leaves are divided, each into three nearly equal compartments, and the subjects, which are the history of the Passion, are to be read across both leaves, beginning from the lowest division on the left. One half of each compartment is occupied by a very rich and elaborate canopy of three pointed arches springing from corbels, with open cusps pierced through the solid substance of the ivory, giving to the design a peculiarly light and elegant effect. Tall pediments rise above the arches, crocketed, but without finials. The spaces in the pediments have rose or wheel ornaments. Between each pediment is a square turret with battlements, and the hollow of the moulding which divides one compartment from another has emblematical vine leaves carved on it in good relief. Under each arch of the canopy is a separate subject.

The ground of each panel of this superb diptych has been coloured blue, and the hair and beards of the figures are gilded. Gilding also remains on some of the mouldings of the arcades. There are no other traces of colour, except of green upon the tree from which Judas hangs and on the crosses.



DIPTYCH.

End of Thirteenth, or, early Fourteenth Century.

No. 211-63

Ancient and Mediæval Ivories.

PHOTOGRAPH IV.

South Kensington Museum No. 212. '65.

PLAQUE. One leaf of a Roman diptych. A female figure, with attendant, before an altar. Roman. 3rd century. Height, $11\frac{3}{4}$ inches; width, $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Bought, 420*l*.

This is one leaf of the very celebrated diptych engraved and described by Gori, tom. i. p. 203, and known as the *Diptychon Melertense*. The diptych was formerly attached to a reliquary at Moutiers in France and the other leaf still exists, preserved at Paris in the Museum of the Hôtel de Cluny.

A female, a priestess, clothed from the shoulders to the feet in a long tunic, over which is thrown a pall or cloak falling behind her over the left shoulder, stands before an altar on which a fire is lighted. She holds in her left-hand an open *acerra* or small box from which she takes a grain, perhaps, of incense with the finger and thumb of the other hand, in the act of dropping it on the flame. On the wrist of either arm is a bracelet. Her hair is bound with a fillet of ivy or small vine leaves and gathered into a knot behind the head. On the feet are sandals. The whole figure is extremely graceful and dignified; the expression of the face earnest and devotional; the form of the figure rightly expressed beneath the drapery, and the hands and feet well and carefully carved.

Behind the altar is a young female attendant, a child, holding a bowl in one hand, and in the other a *cantharus* or two-handled vase, both of which she presents to the priestess, looking up to her. The girl is clothed in a single light garment, girdled and evidently open at the sides down to the waist; it falls below the shoulder, which is thus left bare as well as the arm.

The altar is of the usual classic form, having under the top slab a wide scroll with volutes; the sides are ornamented with a bold wreath and fillets. The upper portion of the altar resembles a capital of the Ionic order and of an archaic type. The subject is within a rich border of floriated ornaments interlacing.

Behind the attendant is an oak tree, having several branches; the leaves and acorns very delicately executed. It spreads over the head of the priestess. Above the tree on a tablet, occupying the width of the panel is incised in uncial letters, the title, SYMMACHORVM.



LEAF OF A ROMAN DIPTYCH.

Third Century.

NO. 212. '65.

PHOTOGRAPH V.

South Kensington Museum No. 213. '65.

PANEL or PLAQUE. Our Lord and two apostles under canopies. French. 14th century. Height, $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches; width, $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Bought, 1687.

A very fine and beautiful example of the rare pierced or open work; in good preservation.

In the centre is our Lord standing, holding a small cross in His right hand; and a globe, on which is incised a cross, in the left. On the one side is the apostle St. Peter; on the other is St. Paul. The two apostles turn towards the Saviour, and all the three figures are vested in long garments. The draperies are admirably and most carefully carved; the heads are expressive, and that of our Lord full of dignity.

Each figure is placed on a low pedestal of pierced work with quatrefoils in a niche, over which is a rich canopy of three small arches with cusps. Above the arches rise pediments with a rose and quatrefoil in each. The panels behind the pediments are filled with narrow pointed arches, and between them a slender pinnacle with buttresses. The back of every niche is filled with tall pointed decorated windows.

The whole of this architectural decoration is executed in the most delicate and beautiful open work, so carefully carried out in every detail that the pattern even of the groined roofs under each canopy, over the heads of the three figures, is clearly seen.

Above these niches are three corresponding small square compartments.

In the left is the Annunciation; in the middle is the Adoration of the Kings; and in the right compartment is the Presentation.

The three niches and the three compartments are separated by uprights divided into four stages, in each of which is a small figure of a saint; except that at the top there are two angels, blowing trumpets.

The excellence of the workmanship of this panel can hardly be surpassed.



PANEL, PROBABLY OF A CASKET.

Fourteenth Century.

No. 213-65.

PHOTOGRAPH VI.

South Kensington Museum No. 214. '65.

THE HEAD OF A PASTORAL STAFF. French.
14th century. Height, $6\frac{3}{4}$ inches; width, $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches.
Bought, 1687.

The volute is filled with a double subject.

On one side the Virgin and Child, as in No. 297. '67, except that the angels have large cloaks or palls thrown over their tunics; and the Bleffed Virgin is not crowned. On the other side the Crucifixion: a rood; our Lord with His mother and St. John on either side.

The crook is ornamented on the outside with a very rich branch of a vine, with large leaves cut in high relief all round. There are a few small bunches of fruit.

The volute is supported from below by an angel, designed with great spirit and well executed. He is clothed in a long tunic, under which are seen the feet, bare.

The whole is carved from one piece of ivory: the two subjects in the volute in open work.



HEAD OF A PASTORAL STAFF

Fourteenth Century.

No. 214-65.

Ancient and Mediæval Ivories.

PHOTOGRAPH VII.

South Kensington Museum No. 217. '65.

BOX. Cylindrical, with rounded cover. Moorish. 10th century. Height, 3 inches; diameter, 4 inches. Bought, 112*l*.

This beautiful box is carved throughout, except the bottom of it, with interlacing narrow bands forming quatrefoils, in which, on the cover, are four eagles. These have spread wings and stand erect; well designed and most delicately executed. A small knob serves to lift the lid.

Round the side, each quatrefoil is filled with a star having a leaf ornament. The same decoration is repeated in the spaces between the larger quatrefoils on the cover.

The whole is carved in pierced work, except a band which forms the upper upright portion of the box, round the side of the lid. This band has an Arabic inscription; it is slightly mutilated and has been translated, "A favour of God to the servant of God, Al Hakem al Mostanser Billah, commander of the faithful." He was a Caliph who reigned at Cordova A.D. 961-976.

This box has at some time been subjected to great heat, or perhaps fire. The ivory has become fragile and should be very carefully handled. It has now an appearance something like the very ancient ivories found at Nineveh.



BOX, MOORISH WORK.

Tenth Century.

No. 217-63

PHOTOGRAPH VIII.

South Kensington Museum No. 219. '65.

PLAQUE. St. Sebastian. North Italian. 15th century. Height, $9\frac{3}{8}$ inches; extreme width, $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Bought, 84*l*.

This may, perhaps, as rightly be called a small figure in low relief; and is placed on a background of wood. The design and execution are admirable. The saint is represented unclothed except by a small piece of drapery over the loins, crossed and the end falling between the legs half way to the knees. His head leans as it were exhausted away from the tree to which his hands are fastened behind him with a rope; and the same effect of weakness is given by the comparative lightness of the legs. The beard is lightly indicated; his hair long, falling in three rows of curls behind over his shoulders. He stands upon the side of a low mound or hill, with a tree sculptured in the distance to the right.

The subject is in a frame of the same period, with a marquetry border; of the style common in North Italy in the 15th century.



ST. SEBASTIAN.

Fifteenth Century.

No. 219. '65.

PHOTOGRAPH IX.

South Kensington Museum No. 138. '66.

BOOK COVER. Five panels with scriptural subjects. Carovingian. 9th century. Height, exclusive of frame, 15 inches; width, 10½ inches. Bought, 588*l*.

This magnificent book cover is complete and uninjured, and probably is not to be surpassed by any other example of the same style and period now existing. It is almost identical in size, style, and arrangement with a cover preserved in the Museum of the Vatican, described in Gori, *Thesaurus Diptychorum*, tom. 3, p. 25. The Vatican ivory still forms the cover of the manuscript on which it was originally placed; a volume containing the Gospels of St. Luke and St. John.

The entire cover is composed of five pieces; a centre panel, with two narrower panels at the sides; and at the top and bottom a fourth and fifth panel occupying the whole width across the other three. The sides are sloped or shaped at the narrow ends, corresponding with slopes to fit the arrangement of the fourth and fifth panels.

The centre panel is rectangular; in height, 8¾ inches; in width, 4 inches. The subject is the Virgin and Child. The Blessed Virgin sits upon a throne or chair, of which little is seen except the upper part of the back above her shoulders; the rest is concealed by the ample folds of her garments. The Virgin holds the Infant on her left arm, which falls along her side, simply supporting Him in a sitting posture by His feet. With her right hand she points to Him across her breast. She is clothed in a long garment reaching to the feet, on which are shoes; and is covered also with a large cloak, falling entirely over her back and in front down to the waist, so that nothing is seen in the way of a girdle.

On the left panel is a prophet, perhaps Isaiah. He stands under a round arch, resting on two columns fluted perpendicularly from top to bottom. In the spandrels above it are two branches of trees, apparently of the olive.

On the right panel, under an arch of like style, is the figure of a man, probably intended for Melchisedec; he stands carrying a censer in his right hand, swinging from three chains, and in the left a round covered box or vase with the incense.

These side panels are each 2½ inches in width, and in height, to the extreme corners of the slope, 9¾ inches.

In the top panel two angels, floating upon the clouds and with wings extended, hold in their outspread arms a round shield, inside which is the bust of our Lord, nimbed and in the act of giving benediction. The long garments and veils of the angels extend lightly behind them in the air.

The lower panel has two subjects. On the left and centre is the Nativity. St. Joseph sits in a chair leaning his head on his left arm and regarding the Blessed Virgin who, lying on a couch and half raised up, looks towards her Child.

On the right the Angel appearing to the Shepherds



BOOK COVER.

Ninth Century.

No. 138-66.

PHOTOGRAPH X.

South Kensington Museum No. 141. '66.

TRIPTYCH. French. 14th century. Height of centre piece, 12 inches; width, 6 inches; width of each wing, 3 inches. Bought, 448*l*.

In the centre of this very fine and unusually large triptych the Virgin stands, holding the Infant on her left arm, under a cusped-pointed arch supported upon two slender pillars with foliated capitals. The top of the pediment has been cut away, and two finials, probably ornamented, have also been lost from the turrets which flank each side of the pediment.

The figure of the Blessed Virgin is ten inches in height, and the depth of the relief half an inch; thus throwing out the design with great power and boldness of effect. She holds a lily in the right hand and looks down smiling upon the Child, Who turns up His face towards hers, grasping tenderly the ends of the veil which falls over her shoulders down her breast. The Infant holds a small globe in His left hand; there has been a cross upon the globe, now broken off. The Virgin is crowned and an angel has just placed the crown upon her head; his hands still touching the fleurs-de-lis which ornament it. The Virgin is vested in the usual mode, a long robe falling from the throat to the ground confined by a carved girdle round the waist and allowing the faldetailed feet to be seen from under it. Over the robe an ample cloak, gathered in very graceful folds into the girdle on the left side.

The wings have also lost the extreme points; it is probable that the task would not allow the design to be fully completed in one piece, and the small portions missing, as well as of the pediment, were added from other bits of ivory.

The wings are divided each into two equal compartments, surmounted by the usual triangular division. The subjects are: 1. The Annunciation; 2. The Nativity; 3. The Adoration of the Kings, 4. The Presentation in the Temple.



TRIPTYCH

Fourteenth Century.

No. 141-66.

Ancient and Mediæval Ivories.

PHOTOGRAPH XI.

South Kensington Museum No. 142. '66.

PLAQUE. The Adoration of the Kings. Anglo-Saxon.
11th century. Height, 14 inches; extreme width,
6 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Bought, 218/.

This remarkable piece is sculptured on bone, not ivory, although the delicacy and fineness of the grain in front might mislead one to declare the material to be true ivory. The truth is evident on the back.

The figures of the Virgin and Child are gigantic in comparison with those of the three kings. The Virgin is represented sitting under a round arch or canopy, from which a curtain hangs suspended from five rings passing over a rod and following the sweep of the arch. She is vested in a long robe falling to the feet, over which is a tunic with large wide sleeves, and over all a pallium or cloak fastened at the throat, in the manner of a cope. The Virgin holds in her left hand a flowering lily; with the right she supports the Infant in a sitting posture on her lap.

On the left the three kings, each crowned and carrying a long staff, stand before our Lord, offering their gifts. Their countenances are solemn, almost lugubrious; so also is the expression of the faces of the Virgin and Child. All the mouths are carved with the lips drawn down at the corners.

The height of the sitting figure of the Virgin is nine inches; that of the three kings who are standing at her side about six inches; the crowns on their heads being on a level with her waist.

Above the round arch under which the Virgin is seated is a building with two turrets and a centre dome, on the top of which is carved a small Greek cross.

Notwithstanding the grotesque character which the great size of the sitting figure gives to the whole subject, it is nevertheless treated in a very solemn manner and there is no want of dignity or of religious feeling.

Separated by a very narrow bead the base is occupied by a panel an inch wide and running across the whole and widest piece of the bone, on which are represented two groups of animals fighting. One is apparently a tiger and a bear, the other a wild boar and something meant perhaps for a lion. Most probably the artist had never seen or even heard a true description of either a lion or a tiger, but the bear and the wild boar are so well executed that they show him to have been no stranger to either beast. Behind the supposed tiger is a centaur holding a bow and arrow.



PLAQUE
Eleventh Century.
No. 143. 66.

PHOTOGRAPH XII.

South Kensington Museum No. 145. '66.

PLAQUE. Walrus ivory. The Adoration of the three Kings. Rhenish Byzantine. 11th century. Height, $8\frac{1}{4}$ inches; width, $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Bought, 280/.

The subject is represented under an arcade of three round arches, supported on stout columns with capitals floriated in the broad Norman style, above which are a dome with small turrets on the left and a range of battlements with a tower on the right.

The Blessed Virgin under a dome, which forms the canopy over her, sits on a chair with arms and a high back, holding the Infant in her lap. Her head is covered with a hood, fastened in front of her throat and dropping over the top of the shoulders. She wears three robes, one over the other, the lowest falling to the feet on which are shoes; and over all a large cloak. The Child turns towards the kings, holding a small roll in one hand and stretching out the other.

The three kings approach carrying their gifts each in the right hand covered, and supporting them with the left hand uncovered. The first, above whose head is the star of Bethlehem, is in the attitude of bending to kneel down; the others stand behind. Two are under the centre arch, the third alone under the other to the right. They are all clothed in tunics reaching to the knee; and wear short cloaks, open in front and falling down the back. These are fastened on the left shoulder in Anglo-Saxon style by being drawn through a ring; leaving a fold exposed above it. The end of the cloak covers the right hand holding the gifts. They wear shoes, fastened above the ankle.

The hem of each robe of the Virgin and Child, and of the tunics and cloaks of the kings, is ornamented with rows of small incised dots.

Below the figures are the walls of a town with battlements, a centre gateway, and four towers with cupolas.

The whole is within a wide and rich border of scrolls interlacing and foliated at the extremities.

This piece, like No. 258. '67, is composed of three pieces of ivory.



BOOK COVER.

Eleventh Century.

No. 145-66.

Ancient and Mediæval Ivories.

PHOTOGRAPH XIII.

South Kenfington Museum No. 146. '66.

CASKET. Scenes from mediæval romances. French. 14th century. Height, $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches; length, 10 inches; width, $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Bought, 296*l*.

There are two subjects on the lid of this fine casket: one in the centre; and one divided between the two end compartments.

In the middle is a tournament: two knights tilt at each other with tilting lances. They wear the heavy helmets of the period, having the vizors down; chain armour, close fitting, from neck to foot; and a short tunic over.

Above the knights, in an ornamented balcony with two pieces of drapery thrown over the front of it, are three gentlemen and three ladies.

The two side panels of the lid have the attack by the knights, and the defence by the ladies, of the Castle of Love. The knights are armed as in the tournament, except that on one side instead of the vizored helmets they wear hooded hauberks of chain mail.

The front of the casket is divided into four compartments. The subjects are taken from parts of the then favourite romances of Alexander and Tristan.

The left hand panel shows Aristotle the philosopher instructing the king out of a book.

The next panel has the princess riding on the back of the philosopher whom she has subdued by her charms. The king looks down at his tutor from the window of a round tower, and points to the lady with his finger.

In the third and fourth panels are men and women bathing together under a fountain from which two streams of water pour down on them. Perhaps this is intended for the Fountain of Youth: and it will also explain the meaning of three old people at the top of the preceding division; who may therefore be understood as approaching the fountain.

On one end of the casket is, first, the fable of the Unicorn. This animal in the middle ages was declared to be one of the fiercest and most terrible, yet tame before a maiden, in which case it was easily slain.

Next to this is given the incident from the romance of Tristan, where Isoude and Tristan meet under a tree in which her husband, King Mark, has concealed himself.

The subject at the other end represents a knight who has just alighted from his horse received by an old man, holding a large key, at the door of a castle of which one turret is seen.

The back of the casket is filled with subjects from the romance of Lancelot. It is divided into four compartments. On the left, Lancelot is fighting with the lions; he is killing one of them.

The next division has Lancelot passing the river by means of an immense sword, along which he crawls on his hands and feet. A cloud is over him, from which descend sword blades and spears as if to strike at him whilst he passes over; and perhaps symbolizing the enchantment under which he suffers.

In the third compartment Lancelot is riding in the cart; under which bells are suspended. He turns aside his head and covers his face with his shield, knowing the disgrace to which he was obliged to submit. Three ladies stand in the fourth division of this panel. Probably they are meant for ladies looking at Lancelot in the dwarf's cart.



FRONT OF A CASKET *Fourteenth Century.*

No. 146 66

PHOTOGRAPH XIV.

South Kensington Museum No. 175. '66.

TRIPTYCH. French. 13th century. Height, $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches; width of centre, $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches; of each wing, $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Bought, 210/.

It is scarcely possible that any triptych is existing in any collection which exceeds this in beauty of design, in extreme delicacy of execution, or in perfect preservation. The richness of the architecture and the careful way in which every, the minutest, detail of the dresses of the figures is carried out give at the same time both grace and dignity to the whole, which cannot be surpassed.

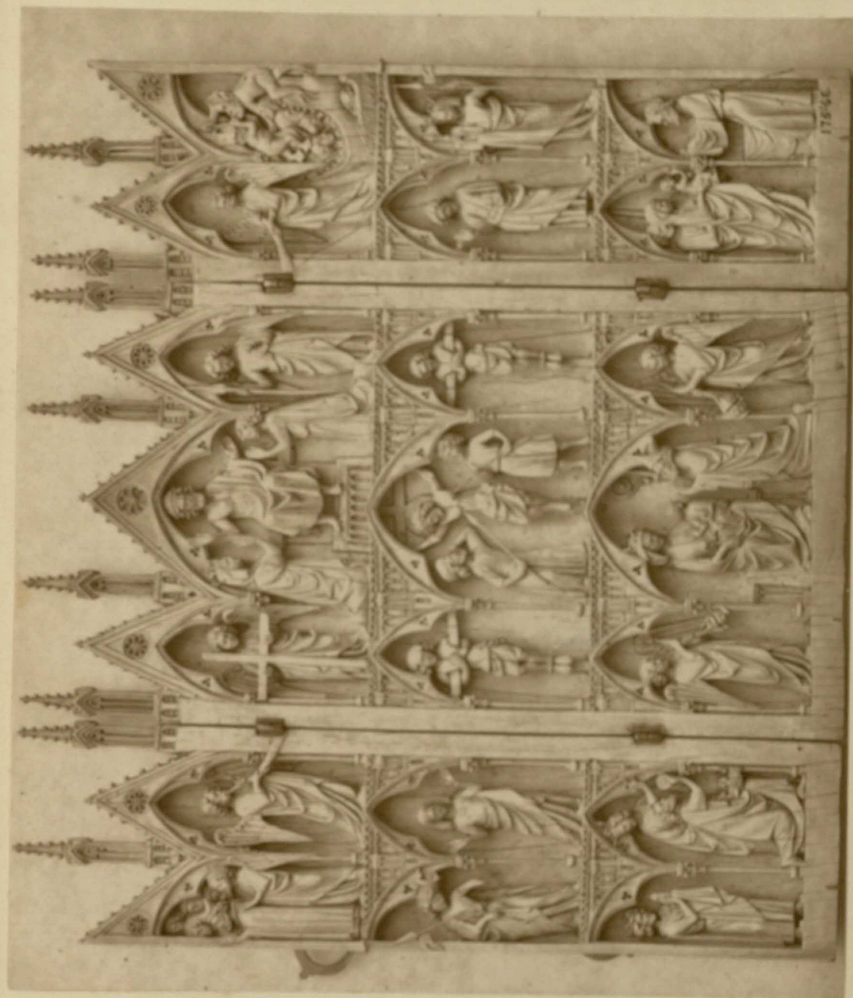
The triptych, opened, exhibits an architectural design, divided in horizontal lines across the centre and the wings into three stages. The centre has in every stage a canopy of three pointed arches, of which the middle has the greatest span, with cusps, and supported on slight columns with floriated capitals. The spandrels of the arches are filled with a pointed arcade, running uninterrupted along the whole triptych. Above this is a moulding with ball flower ornament, dividing the stages. The top division has most elegantly designed pediments over every arch, with recurved crockets and finialed, and with rose windows. Between the pediments rise slender open-worked turrets, above which are long crocketed pinnacles. The wings have each half of the same design.

The subjects of this triptych must be read as a whole, in each stage or division, except the lowest.

In the lowest, the centre has under the middle arch of the canopy the Blessed Virgin seated, with the Child on her left arm.

The subject of the middle division is the Crucifixion; and upon the top is the Last Judgment.

This beautiful triptych is as perfect as when it came from the artist's hand. It must have been always regarded with the greatest admiration and kept with constant care. Even the fragile spears, the crosses, the lily in our Lady's hand, and the pillars of the arcade, which are all most delicately cut clean and clear from the solid ivory, are uninjured.



TRIPTYCH. Thirteenth Century.

No. 175-66.

PHOTOGRAPH XV.

South Kensington Museum No. 215. '66.

PLAQUE, with five medallions, having busts of our Lord and four Saints. Byzantine. 13th century. Height, $9\frac{1}{4}$ inches ; width, $5\frac{3}{8}$ inches. Bought, 74*l*.

Probably a book cover. The centre medallion is $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches diameter, occupying the width of the plaque up to the border. It is filled with a head and bust of our Lord, His right hand raised in benediction, the left holding a small scroll. The long hair and His beard fall over the shoulders and His breast. The four smaller medallions have the busts of St. Philip, St. Stephen, St. Andrew, and St. Thomas, whose names are written in Greek uncials, perpendicularly, by the side of each. The medallions are connected by an interlacing narrow border, and the spaces between them are filled with an elegantly designed open work foliated ornament.



PLAQUE, PROBABLY A BOOK-COVER.

Thirteenth Century.

No. 215. '66.

PHOTOGRAPH XVI.

South Kensington Museum No. 200. '67.

STATUETTE. Virgin and Child. French. 14th century. Height, 8 inches; width, $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Bought, 38*l*.

The Virgin is seated on a high seat, round at the back, following the form of a tusk from which it is carved. She is vested as in No. 4685. '58; and the girdle which is fastened by a buckle, is gilded and coloured green. Her robe also shows a few slight traces of the ornamental border of gold. On her head is a well-designed low coronet, cut from the ivory.

She sits sideways, supporting with the left hand the Child standing on her knee; with the right hand she holds His left foot, which is a little raised.

The expression of the Virgin's face is admirably tender and delicate; she regards the Infant who looks downwards to a dove, which He holds in His hands by both wings.

The ground in front of the chair is shown below the Virgin's feet.



STATUETTE: VIRGIN AND CHILD.

Fourteenth Century.

No. 200 '67.

PHOTOGRAPH XVII.

South Kensington Museum No. 212. '67.

STATUETTE, or Figure. Our Blessed Lord hanging on the Cross. Italian. 14th century. Height, 6 inches. Bought, 15/.

A very fine fragment,—and it is scarcely more than a fragment,—which has been part of a crucifix. The arms have been lost, and the legs broken off violently below the knees. The arms were originally not from the same piece of ivory, but joined, as is commonly the case, to the body.

The figure was represented after death, but the still suffering expression of the drooping head, the strained muscles across the breast showing the ribs, and, as it were, the struggle of the legs contracted in the last agony are admirably given. The eyes are closed, the forehead drawn with pain, the mouth open. The side shows the wound of the spear. The body is clothed with a garment crossed in wide folds over the loins and falling to the knees. The face is bearded and the Saviour's hair falls in long curls, carefully executed, over the shoulders. On his head is the crown of thorns.

It is greatly to be regretted that this beautiful figure has been so mutilated. The conception of the artist is full of true feeling and devotion, and his treatment of the subject an excellent example of the right union of conventionality with enough of what is real.



PORTION OF A CRUCIFIX.

Fourteenth Century.

No. 212. '67.

PHOTOGRAPH XVIII.

South Kensington Museum No. 218. '67.

MIRROR CASE. A tournament. French. 14th century.
Diameter, 4 inches. Bought, 48*l*.

Two knights on horseback engaged in combat with two others. All are armed alike from head to foot in hauberks or coats of chain mail, with helmets and closed vizors. Over the coat of mail each wears a furcoat or loose frock without sleeves. The helmets of the four are crested with a flower like a fleur-de-lis. They have swords only, and carry small triangular shields on which roses are emblazoned. These roses are repeated on the caparisons of the horses.

The tournament takes place under the walls of a castle behind the battlements of which are three ladies, who throw down roses on the combatants. Two have their heads uncovered; the third wears a hood.

The circular rim of the case is ornamented with four dragons well and boldly executed, as in No. 217.



MIRROR CASE.

Fourteenth Century.

No. 218-67.

Ancient and Mediæval Ivories.

PHOTOGRAPH XIX.

South Kensington Museum No. 294. '67.

DIPTYCH or Folding Devotional Tablets. Subjects from the Gospels. French. 14th century. Height, $6\frac{1}{4}$ inches; width of each leaf, $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Bought, 84/.

There is one subject on each leaf, placed under a canopy of three arches crocketed and with finials.

On the left leaf the Blessed Virgin is represented standing and holding on her left arm our Lord as an infant. The Divine Child plays with both hands with one end of a veil falling from the head of the Virgin, His face turned towards her. On each side of the Virgin an angel stands, holding with both hands a candlestick.

The figures are all fully draped: the Virgin has a long robe girded round the waist, covered with a larger cloak or mantle falling in broad loose folds over her arms and in front down to the knees. This robe hangs with remarkable weight and in numerous folds on the right arm.

On the right leaf is the Crucifixion. Our Blessed Lord is suspended upon a perfectly plain, slightly designed, cross; the hands open, and the fingers extended above the wood to which they are nailed; the feet crossed one over the other and fastened with a single nail.

On the right hand of our Lord below the cross, the Virgin, still almost in an upright attitude, is falling fainting into the arms of two women who stand behind her; and below His left hand are three men. The one in front, St. John, holding his robe with his right hand up to his face, but not concealing it; and in his left hand a small square box or book.

This diptych is splendid in execution and good in design. The expression of the head of our Lord, scarcely dead, is admirable. So also the contrast between the attitudes and movements of the angels above each group: in the one full of joy and singing; in the other overwhelmed with grief and horror. Every detail both of the architecture and of the figures is most carefully worked out. The whole design is executed in relief, three-eighths of an inch deep.



DIPTYCH. Fourteenth Century.

No. 254-67.

PHOTOGRAPH XX.

South Kensington Museum No. 366. '71.

A SERIES OF PANELS; three with two compartments in each, $4\frac{3}{8}$ inches by $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches; and two panels, single, $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches by $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Scenes, with one exception, from the Passion of our Lord. French. 14th century. Bought, 250/.

These have been the panels of a casket or reliquary and are carved in open work by an excellent artist of the best period. They are now arranged in one oblong frame, according to the subject.

1. The Marriage at Cana in Galilee.
2. Christ before Pilate.
3. The Flagellation.
4. The carrying of the Cross. The ascent to Cavalry is shown by a man on the right who carries three nails in one hand.
5. The Resurrection.
6. The harrowing of Hell. Our Lord carrying the crozier receives Adam and Eve, two undraped full length figures, who issue from the open mouth of the dragon. Above the mouth, two demons drag down and clasp with their claws another naked figure. This may be intended for the impenitent thief, because behind the Saviour stands a man with a nimbus, his hands clasped in adoration, and covered with a long cloak under which is a garment of hair cloth. This may be the penitent thief. These two figures occur, but rarely, in other ivories and illuminations of the same subject.
7. The Appearance to St. Mary Magdalene.
8. The Appearance to the three women. One kneels, with her hands before her extended and spread open in a very natural way, and behind stand the other two in adoration and with an eager gesture.

Each of the subjects is under a richly decorated canopy of three arches, with tall pediments or gables above, crocketed and finialed. A diminutive angel sits between each gable, playing on an instrument of music, or holding a scroll as if singing. Behind is seen the open work of a panelled screen.

Nothing can exceed the beauty of this example of the rare open work of the 14th century, and the loss of the other panels (for these are probably only eight out of twenty-four) is greatly to be regretted.



PANELS IN OPEN WORK.

Fourteenth Century.

No. 36-37.

PHOTOGRAPH XXI.

South Kensington Museum No. 368. '71.

LEAF OF A CONSULAR DIPTYCH. Of the consul Anastasius Paulus Probus Sabinianus Pompeius. Byzantine. 6th century. Height, $14\frac{1}{4}$ inches; width, 5 inches. Bought, 420*l*.

Anastasius was consul in the year A.D. 517.

The consul is represented sitting in a curule chair, robed in the same manner as the consul Orestes in the diptych No. 139. '66, with tunic, toga or *trabea*, and the broad band or *superhumerales*.

On each side of the consul is a small figure of Victory; these stand on globes and hold above their heads with both hands round tablets.

The canopy under which Anastasius sits is in shape like the pediment of a temple, and rests upon two round columns with debased Corinthian capitals.

At the top is the usual tablet, with the inscription "V. INL. COM. DOMEST. EQVIT. ET. CONS. ORD." "Vir illustris comes domesticorum equitum et consul ordinarius."

The lower portion of the leaf is divided into two equal compartments by a narrow band ornamented with small squares enclosing stars. In the upper division are two servants wearing tunics. Each leads a horse by the bridle out of buildings meant probably for the stables of the circus.

In the lower compartment upon the left is a group of two men and a boy. It may be that these represent some portion of the games in which athletes or acrobats were to exhibit. Behind them is a part of a tower and of the arcade of the circus. Upon the right, originally, as we learn from the engraving of this diptych in the first volume of Gori, p. 280, were two men wearing tunics, one of whom with hands tied behind him stoops forward and puts his head into a large dish fixed upon a tripod; a crab in the dish lies just under his face. Behind this man is the other whose nose has been caught tightly by the claws of a crab, and he stands shaking it with an expression about his mouth as if he had had enough of the amusement. The part containing this man and the tripod has been broken off.

This leaf is in execution far more careful and of better workmanship than the consular diptych of Orestes, No. 139; and with the exception of the imperfection just noticed, and of another less important on the same side at the top, is in admirable preservation.

On the back some slight traces of an inscription in uncial letters still remain.



LEAF OF A CONSULAR DIPTYCH

Sixth Century.

No. 368. '71.

PHOTOGRAPH XXII.

South Kensington Museum No. 370. '71.

SHRINE with Folding Shutters. Two on each side. French. 14th century. Height, $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches; width of centre, $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches; width of shutters, 2 inches. Bought, 165*l*.

A very beautiful shrine; similar in design and style of execution, as well as in the architectural decorations and different subjects, to No. 4686. '58. We have here, also, the Virgin and Child in the centre, the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Nativity, the Adoration of the Kings, and the Presentation in the Temple. There are slight variations; for example, the robe of the Virgin under the canopy is thrown open, rather back from the shoulders, not gathered up in folds across the waist. In the Nativity, again, the Child is in His mother's arms in swaddling clothes, as she lies upon the pallet. Once more, all the three kings stand.

The statuette in the middle is in high relief, but somewhat less clearly cut from the background than in No. 4686.

This shrine has been painted and gilded. Slight traces of the colour and gold still remain.



SHRINE.

Fourteenth Century.

No. 370—71

PHOTOGRAPH XXIII.

South Kensington Museum No. 371. '71.

H EAD of a Tau. Walrus ivory. Openwork. Northern Europe. 11th century. Length, $6\frac{3}{4}$ inches; width, $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Bought, 200/.

The two volutes of this Tau are formed of the bodies and heads of serpents, springing from the middle and bending round to the centre of each volute where they terminate; three of them with open jaws, seizing upon men by their waists who struggle and hold the upper jaw. The fourth serpent lies prostrate before the archangel St. Michael, who is armed with sword and shield. The three men are all dressed alike in long tunics with wide sleeves decorated with borders having a small beaded ornamentation.

On one side, the centre is occupied by a figure of our Lord, seated and seen down to the knees; He holds a book in the left hand and with the right He gives benediction. A cruciferous nimbus surrounds His head. He is vested in a long robe and over it is a large mantle or cloak thrown across the left arm. This subject is carved in high relief within a circle having a rich floriated border.

On the other side, within a similar circle, are the Blessed Virgin and the Infant. She wears a tight-fitting robe with hanging sleeves, her head covered with a veil, and looks downwards to the Child Who sits upon her left knee with His face turned towards her. He is vested in what seems to represent a small cope over His under garment.

The figures and the heads of the serpents in the volutes of this fine Tau are carved in openwork.



A TAU. Eleventh Century.
No. 371-72.

PHOTOGRAPH XXIV.

South Kensington Museum No. 7. '72.

STATUETTE. Virgin and Child. English (?). 14th century. Height, $7\frac{1}{4}$ inches; width, 2 inches. Bought, 25*l*.

The Blessed Virgin stands holding the Child on her left arm rather higher than is usual, so that His face is on a level with and almost touches her cheek. She is vested as in the statuettes No. 4685. '58 and No. 201. '67, her tunic falling down to and covering her feet. She holds the stem of a lily, of which the flower is lost, in her right hand. The Infant throws His right arm round His mother's neck; a tender and beautiful action of which there is no other example in the collection.

The robes of the Virgin have been coloured.



STATUETTE: VIRGIN AND CHILD.

Fourteenth Century.

No. 7. '72.

